

TO

PETER WALKER, Esq.

OF WORTH, IN THE COUNTY OF  
SUSSEX.

*On the Spy-System.—On the Calumniating System.—On the conduct of some base Merchants and Master Manufacturers.—On the conduct and projects of Mr. Wooler.*

North Hampstead, Long Island,  
Aug. 29, 1817.

MY DEAR WALKER,

Amongst the thoughts, which most oppressed my mind at leaving England, was that of absence from so many and such faithful and indulgent friends, and, of all these, there was scarcely one whom I left with more regret than I left you, the very first sight of whom, the very first sound of whose voice in my ear, were accompanied with proofs of such friendship as I have read of in romances, but such as I never before witnessed in real life. It was in the King's Bench prison you found me, previous to my being taken up for judgment for the crime of having expressed my indignation at the flogging of English Local Militia-Men, in the heart of England, under the bayonets of Hanoverian troops. It was expected, that, in order to disable me from writing for the press, I should be sent to some distant jail. In this expectation,

you proposed, that a certain number of friends should agree to succeed each other in living, at their own expence, in whatever town that jail should be, in order to afford me society and assistance; and, you proposed to *fill this post yourself* for the first four months. Gentle Pussy thought that Newgate would be the most humiliating; and, therefore, thither she sent me and crammed me in amongst swindlers, felons, and convicts, of whom ASTLETT was one. I was hardly arrived when the brave old MAJOR CARTWRIGHT came.—“And,” exclaimed he, “is *this* the place they have sent you to! I am seventy years old, but — — I shall yet live to see — —!” You were the next to arrive, and when, by dint of money, I had obtained the *favour* to be put into a room by myself, you hurried home, and brought me bedstead, chairs, tables, bedding, and every thing; and, I think, I see you now, stripped in your shirt, putting the bedstead together and making up my bed. During the whole of the two years you never suffered me to be lonely; and, your kindness was such, that when you found me engaged; when any one arrived; you instantly departed, unless pressed to stay. Thus proving, that your visits arose solely from your desire to alleviate the sufferings of confinement. And, at the close of the period, though the

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sum was so enormous, and the period so long, you, with my excellent friend BROWN, voluntarily became *my bail*, and spoke of it, as he did, as an honour done to yourself.

Great, however, as these acts of friendship were, they do not form the strongest ground of my attachment to you. Your stock of knowledge, your sound judgment, your matchless talent at discriminating, your sincerity and your modesty, are a still stronger ground, and of all these I have long been an admiring witness, and from them I have, I hope, profited in some slight degree. But, of all your qualities, that of real, disinterested public-spirit is not the least to be admired. In you I have never observed injustice, or intolerance, towards any man, or set of men; your views of Reform have always been straight-forward; and I hope yet to see the day, when your country will shew that it knows how to find your great merits under the veil of your diffidence in your own abilities. When I have heard, in my own family, or amongst our friends, exclamations against "that frothy, "conceited, impudent, and cruel "Irish ruffian," I have always said, "think of *Walker*, then you will drop "the word *Irish*." And, my good friend, I do assure you, that those prejudices with regard to your country, which I had, in common with my countrymen, imbibed from my infancy, were never completely eradicated, 'till my experience of your heart and head performed the task.

What I have here written I owed to my own feelings as well as to justice and to my country; and I could not proceed in addressing you upon pub-

lic matters, 'till I had made an attempt to satisfy the claim. It will give you no pleasure to be the subject of praise; but, as a proof, that no distance can weaken my attachment to you, I hope, that this paper will be read by you with great satisfaction.

The *Spy-System*, or, as a worthy Lancashire friend of ours called it, the "*Spo-y-System*," used to be treated by me with ridicule. He, however, insisted, that it was, and long had been, on foot and in great vigour; and you observed, not many weeks before I left England, that, as there were no treasons, treasons would be made, and traitors would be hired. Your opinions have now been proved to be correct. The traitors have been hired, and the fact is openly avowed by the base employers. Indeed they could not deny it. The proofs were at hand. They had been caught in the fact.

What a picture, then, does their System now present? You used to say, that I turned an abstruse point about on every side, and at both ends, till, at last, the dullest eyes saw it. So these Spy-Employers seem to be turning their System about. They appear to be resolved to keep on, 'till it shall be impossible for even their own creatures to have impudence enough left to say one word in their favour. They seem to be determined to exhaust their whole stock of inventions to provide for themselves im-

placable and everlasting hatred. What! Was the country too quiet for them? Yes, and you will remember with what peculiar malignity they spoke of these essays of mine, the main object of which was to prevent



disorder and riot. Amongst the endless abuse, heaped upon me by those choice tools of corruption, *Walter* and *Stewart*, there was none equal to that which was drawn forth by my endeavours to put an end to the destruction of machines and to the attacks on bakers and butchers. These were the things, which these ruffians wanted to see continued; because, against acts like these all good men would naturally say, that *force* must be employed. Nothing, therefore, was so painful to these plot-makers as to see the people really enlightened as to the *cause* of their sufferings. This was that *change* in the character of the people, which was so feelingly spoken of in the First Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Lords. The people had met by twenties and thirties and forties of thousands, and they had *talked sense*, and had *quietly separated*. Mr. BENBOW, who is a shoe-maker, and whom, I see, SIDMOUTH has in one of his dungeons, was talking with me upon some point (I forget what), and, in order to maintain his opinion, he pulled a *Volume of Blackstone* out of his pocket. This was that *dreadful* change of character, of which the Borough-mongers were so much afraid. And well they might be afraid of it, unless they had meant to yield the people their rights; for, it amounted to a proof, that the people now understood those rights, and that they were never again to be deceived.

But, as it was not easy to resort to a military system without some apparent reason, it was necessary to hatch plots. CASTLE's plots are now blown into the air. But, there wanted plots

in country as well as town. The people, full of indignation at the cruel acts which had been adopted, were, of course, brooding resentment; and, we now see, that the hired Spies were sent expressly to blow this into a flame. If a man, very deeply injured by another, were to be instigated by a third party to go and assist the third party in killing the cruel man, who would be the *real murderer*? And, what would you say to a fourth party, who should have hired the third for the purpose? But, the present case is still worse; for here the cruel man hires the third party to instigate the suffering party to *attempt* the deed, and then to betray the suffering party into his hands. Not content with the injuries he has inflicted already, the cruel man, in this case, knowing that his victim cannot forgive him, seeks to take *his blood*, and to take it, too, by the most base, cowardly, and detestable of means.

However, my friend, it is still *inconsistent* in any one to disapprove even of the *Spy-System*, unless he, at the same time, *be an advocate for Reform*, or, unless he wishes, indeed, to exchange the Dungeon and Spy-System for the more honest system of openly avowed military despotism and *martial-law*; for, to prevent a Reform there must be *force* continually in activity. It is nonsense to talk of *hushing things up*. What is it to the mass of the people what the thing is *called*, which makes them poor and miserable? What is it to a farmer, whether he be put into jail by the tax-gatherer, or by Sidmouth? What is it to the labourer, whether he starve in a hut, or in a dungeon? So long as you pay

*twenty* English shillings for a bushel of that very salt, for which, when landed here, I pay *two shillings and sixpence*, what is it to you whether the soldiers, the spies, or the great Boroughmonger families and their dependents swallow the *seventeen shillings and sixpence*? The poor people, the ruffians tell us, *pay no taxes*. But, I think, that Mr. VANSITTART, in the late debate on the salt tax, said, that it was impossible to find a *productive* tax, which would not weigh *heavily* upon the *labouring classes*. I have now a man and his wife living with me, who come from WICKHAM in Hampshire, only four miles from Botley. The man's name is DANIEL CHURCHER. He and his father have worked for me, upon some occasions, at Fairthorn, it seems, and his uncle and cousins have worked for me for years. This man arrived at New York sometime back, and finding out my Nephew, he inquired for me, and came and offered his services. His wages are *twenty two pounds ten shillings for the year*; and his wife's *thirteen pounds ten shillings*. I speak of English money. They are, of course, *boarded and lodged* in the house at my expence, and, I need not say, that they live well. These people, though they have no child, were starving at home. The man had *eight shillings a week*, out of which he had to pay for *board, rent, and fuel*. Thus, in place of *twenty pounds sixteen shillings*, and *no food, lodging or fuel*; he has now *thirty six pounds clear money* to lay by, except what may be wanted to buy them cloaths. Yet, I am no loser by this great gain to him; for I pay 17s. 6d. less for

each bushel of salt that I use; my horses are not taxed; my windows are not taxed; my malt is not taxed. I can make my own malt, and at about 2s. 6d. sterling a bushel. The tax on the malt and salt alone would amount to more than the *whole wages, board and all*, of this man and his wife. Is it not, then, the *poor people* who suffer *most severely* from the taxes? And, is it *possible* for a nation, taxed as the English people are, to be otherwise than miserable? 'Squire GOODLAD, an old neighbour of mine, and by no means a bad man, or a bad justice of the peace, told CHURCHER, it seems, that he had *better remain at home*; for that "*things would come about*." Churcher could not see any such prospect, and, very fortunately for him, rejected the SQUIRE's advice, sold off his goods, and came to an unoppressed country. In a few years of good behaviour and economy, this man must be better off than one half of the tradesmen and farmers in and about Wickham; and, in the meanwhile he has none of their miseries and anxieties. He has no dunning tax-gatherer to torment him. He has no wretched beggars to wound his heart; he has no despots to cringe to, and no spies to lay wait for his incautious expressions and sell his blood to the inexorable Boroughmongers.

This instance, my good friend, containing *names, dates, and sums*, is worth a thousand sets of loose and general assertions. The wages, which this man and his wife receive from me, they could obtain *any where*. Their desire to live with me might, perhaps, have enabled me to save some pounds

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in their wages. But, I have settled on the fair wages of the country for a common labouring man and a farmhouse woman servant. How many, alas! how many thousands, of men, in all respects as good as this man, are there now in England living upon weak tea and potatoes, and with every art that the most rigid economy can practise, having hardly a sufficiency of rags to cover them! If a poor man, living by the side of a common makes shift to raise a pig, and to obtain the means of fattening it; when he comes to the time of killing, he has half a guinea, or thereabouts, to pay for the salt to salt it, instead of the fifteen-pence that he would have to pay here. I have known men obliged to sell their pig alive, or part with it when dead, for want of the means to buy salt, in order to obtain the means of paying for salt for the remaining part. This is wholly the effect of inexorable taxation; and, as we have a thousand times proved, this taxation has been the natural and necessary effect of the Borough System, which System, as I before observed, as necessarily engenders Spies and informers as putrid flesh engenders maggots. But, as long as any appearances of this are kept up, the Calumniating System must proceed. No person in England has watched the progress and effects of this System more narrowly than you have. You have often traced the whisper, begun at Whitehall, to the ruin of men of character and talent. Of the more overt acts of the wretches the attempts that Walter Stewart, and other miscreants of the hired press, have made, in order

to blacken the character, and to disturb the peace of the families, of public-spirited men, the hand-bills stuck up about the time of the grand conspiracy against the People will be long remembered. Amongst these, however, I did not, in my late *history of the plots*, notice, as I ought to have done, the curious fact, brought forth, and now again boldly stated in the House of Commons, by that honest and brave man, the Lord Mayor. Previous to the third Spa-fields Meeting, there was a bill stuck up, exciting the people to riot, and this act the Lord Mayor clearly traced and distinctly imputed to Lord Sidmouth's Office. But, there was a fact, relative to the second Meeting, which never came to light; or, at least, which never was fully recorded in print. About nine or ten in the morning of that day, there was a bill handed about amongst the crowd, who had begun to assemble, having these words: "A pot of beer for a penny and bread for two pence: HUNT REGENT and COBBETT KING: Go it, my Boys!" The bills were seen by several persons, whose evidence we could have had; and we could have proved, I believe, that it was issued from one of the Police Offices; but we could not do this without exposing our informer to certain ruin. He would not consent to be given up; and, though we had received the information under no promise of secrecy, we thought that the case, strong as it was, would not justify the exposing of any man to torments such as would have befallen this individual. The Bloody Jefferies used to say, that there was "more ways than one of

"killing a cat;" and, the man, to whom I allude, would most assuredly have soon seen this maxim of the former Jefferies verified. If a man is to be come at by none of the *open* means; under no shape that the catalogue of public crimes, or pretended crimes, afford; there is the *Bank* to work him, if he be in trade; if a farmer, there is the *Landlord* and the *Parson*; and, if he has any thing of visible property beyond the shirt upon his back, there is the *Taxgatherer*. If all these fail, a man has *friends*, he may have a *mortgagee* or a *creditor* of some sort. He has a wife, a mistress, a child, or a servant to be stirred up against him. My rascally servant boy, whose mother had been paid his wages before-hand, and who confessed to the Magistrate, Mr. Neville, that the *only fault* he had to find with his place was, that I made him rise every morning *as early as I did*, had all the Nobility and *Gentry*, as the base creatures call themselves, to *sympathise* with him, and to endeavour to prevent him from being compelled to answer for his breach of contract, which contract, under such protection, he finally set at defiance. In that memorable instance of rascality, the party found no difficulty in suing *forma pauperis*; but, in the case of the boy *Dogood*, who was so flagrantly and falsely imprisoned, and who was so cruelly treated, for *pulling down a libellous Bill against Mr. HUNT*; though the case was clearly proved; though the Bill was traced to the Police-Office; though the Attorney General was written to by Lord Folkstone to point out to the Boy how to obtain redress; and though the Boy afterwards went and

applied to the Chief Justice in Court; in *this case*, there was no means found for bringing the action! And, the boy remains unredressed, while the Magistrate is in high favour with the Boroughmongers! You yourself have experienced how easy it is for a Sessions of Justices of the Peace to bring the artillery of the Boroughmongers to bear upon a case of petty assault and battery. Mr. HUNT's politics have risen up in judgment against him in all the pursuits and capacities and functions of his life; but, as was once well and kindly observed by Sir FRANCIS BURDETT, the best answer to all the calumnies on Mr. HUNT's private character, was, that, when he left Wiltshire to go and live in Sussex, *all his long troop of servants followed him*; and, when he quitted Sussex and his farming there, they all *returned back to Wiltshire*, except those of whom he still had need. In *what way*, admitting of calumny, has not Sir FRANCIS BURDETT been calumniated? A man so perfectly *gentle* in all his manners I never have seen. To all his people he is indulgence personified. Yet, he has been designated as a *cruel Landlord and Master*! He himself will hardly believe this. It is right, however, that he should know it; because knowing its injustice, he may have a correct idea of the malignity of the Borough faction, the implacableness of which, he may be assured, will never have any other measure than that of his zeal in the cause of the People. He may be assured, that his only choice lies between the hatred of the faction and the hatred of the People. Will the Russells, or the Cavendishes, or any of the Boroughmongers, ex-

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forgive him? Yes, if he completely abandons the People, who never abandoned him for one single moment. Does he fear to have *equals* amongst the Reformers? Amongst the Borough-monger tribe, he can be only an *underling*, and an underling at once despised and suspected.

From this subject, which is too painful to dwell on, I come to an instance of calumny on your friend, very trifling indeed, in *itself*; but, as you will think, I hope, of considerable importance, when *its origin* is clearly discovered; and it will serve to illustrate, too, the observations before made, that there is no circumstance in a man's life too low for the Boroughmongers and their creatures to hunt out. There is a paper, published at New York, called the *National Advocate*, which re-published that vile attack on me by Mr. WOOLER, which was answered in my letter to our Venerable Leader in the cause of Reform, and which answer has, I should think, suffocated Mr. WOOLER in England as completely as it has here. However, before I close this letter, I shall give this *bug* another crush. Let me first crack a Yankee *flea*.

In the paper, before mentioned, was re-published, on the 22d instant, from a Boston paper, which had taken it from an *English paper*, the following paragraph: "A *republican* passenger from England to America with Cobbett, writes, that he was never in company with a *greater blackguard*; and that he is besides a *lordly disagreeable person*, and *wanted every one to cringe to him*. The letter is dated *Humphreysville*. (Con.) May 27."

You will ask, "where the Devil is *Humphrey's Ville* and where is *Con*?" And then you will exclaim, "why does COBBETT plague himself with this rascally anonymous stuff!" Stop, my friend! You see, that pains have been taken to send this stuff to *England*! That is quite enough for me. But, as you will find, there is a

most *curious* and *interesting* CAUSE of this silly calumny; and, that the *writer* and *circulator* of it would have gnawed their fingers off up to the second joint at least, rather than have sent it to the press, if they could have foreseen the ultimate consequences.

When we went on board the IMPORTER at Liverpool, it was nearly dark. The boat was so full that some of the passengers were obliged to quit it, and go to another boat. Amongst these was a youngish man, who, in a voice half nasal and half squeak, cried out, "but there is my *Portfolio*! I cannot go and leave my *Portfolio*! I shall be ruined if my *Portfolio* gets wet!" The Captain, who was going with us, pledged his life for the safety of every thing. One of my sons, who said in my ear, "who can that be?" was answered by me, "Oh! he is only an Envoy-Extraordinary from some Dry-Good Store, be assured," which afterwards proved to be the case to the very letter.

The next day, when we came to muster, we found our cabin-companions to be, a Mr. ASTOR, son of a respectable Merchant of New York, who had been some years in Europe, who had travelled over the greater part of it, and who was perfectly civil and polite. Two young men, belonging to Manufacturing establishments at Manchester, who were going out with goods, and who, from the very little I heard them say, seemed to think that *Sinecures* were no bad things, because, as one of them explained the matter, *every man would get one if he could*. The fourth was the Captain's brother, a Taylor of New York, who reviled PAINE's memory without being able to tell why, and who approved of the employment of spies, asserting, I hope falsely, that spies were employed constantly by the Corporation of New York. The Fifth was a very pretty woman from Manchester, with two

small children, going out to her husband, who, if it was impossible for her wholly to avoid giving us annoyance, conducted herself with the most exemplary patience, never uttering one word of complaint or of apprehension, during a most disagreeable and most perilous voyage. The Captain's brother, the *Aristocratical Taylor*, died at the end of about three weeks of a lingering disease, the effects of which, while he was alive (confined in so small a place as we were), formed a subject, not only of most horrible disgust, but of some apprehension on account of probable infection. The sixth and last of our inmates was the Envoy-Extraordinary, before mentioned, who called himself a *Federalist*, as did also the Captain call himself, and certainly, with the exception of Mr. Astor we could not well have fallen into more disagreeable company. The few times that I have ever travelled in a stage coach, I have held my tongue, and, in order to keep all quite quiet, I have generally taken a French book to read. But, a sea-voyage is a different thing. However, as my sons spoke French as well as myself, we could talk and laugh about all sorts of things quite at our ease, and without interfering with the people. We had also some books, and sometimes we could write a little. Nevertheless, talk amongst us all would sometimes arise; and, as it was one of the features in the Envoy's character to affect an understanding in matters that he knew nothing of, he, one day told us, that Dr. Mitchell of New York, was writing a very interesting work on "the *Theology of Fishes*." I ought to have let it pass; but the Envoy was a great stickler for religion, as he called it, and I could not help exclaiming, "I wonder what religion *they* are of!" A laugh ensued, and the Envoy curled up his sharp nose a quarter of an inch beyond its usual point of altitude. Not long after this the Envoy, fearing apparently, that the

little attention we paid to him might be owing to our want of a knowledge of the fact, that some relation of his was a *minister of the Church of England*, communicated, in no very unostentatious way, that important fact, holding in his hand, at the same time, a Prayer Book of the *Episcopal Church* in this country. I took this opportunity of denying, that this Church was *the same as ours*. A dispute arose, during which I showed, from his own book, that he was a *Seceder*, at least, if not a *Schismatic*; for, that this Church has not only abandoned part of our *Apostle's Creed* (or, at least, left the abandonment *optional*); but, that it has wholly abandoned the *auricular confession and absolution of sins* which our Church enjoins, and, what is more, that it has thrown out the whole of the *Athanasian Creed*! I added, that, as I was going to New York, and had no taste for being burnt alive, I would not pretend to give any opinion of the *wisdom* of those, who belonged to his Church, and who thought that they belonged to ours; but, that the Churches *were not the same*, and that, for my part, I should never go to their places, unless carried thither, seeing that it was my resolution to stick, as long as I lived, by the good old Church of England as by *Act of Parliament made and established*.

These, I suppose, were the instances, in which he found me "*lordly*," "*disagreeable*," and "*blackguard*," for the use of which association of epithets I leave his *English* correspondent, of whom I shall speak by and by, to receive the thanks of the Borough-mongers. But the grand ground of the charges against me, and out of which the *English* rascal's stupid malice has arisen, is yet to be mentioned. One Sunday morning, the weather being very fine, the Envoy had dressed himself out in all his Bond-street gear, not by any means forgetting his high-heeled boots, and perceiving, without doubt, the obdu-

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racy of our feelings, which remained wholly unmoved towards admiration by all these attempts, seems to have resolved, as a last shift, to try the virtues of his *Portfolio* upon us. Out, therefore, it came, and with a thundering slap upon the table, at which we sat attentively reading, having been, for a short time, delivered from the company of the sick taylor, who had been carried upon deck to take the air. Down came the Portfolio, and I could have cursed the impertinent fop most heartily for the interruption; but, I had scarcely had time to look up, when a part of the contents of this important depository was laid before me for my inspection; to wit; some *Pattern Cards* of cloth of various colours, prepared in England, to be exhibited to the virtuosi, who might visit the *Store* of D. STONE and Co. (I think it was) whom the Envoy had represented abroad. I, at first, looked at it merely because I could no longer read; but, my eye was soon attracted more closely; not by the snips of cloth, but by an engraving at the top of the card; and, having taken a short time to examine this, I exclaimed: "Look here William! Look here John! See what rascals some of these Master Manufacturers are! They would barter their king, towards whom they affect so much loyalty; they would barter their country; they would barter the honour of their wives and daughters; and they would barter their souls, for the sake of a handful of American Dollars, or of the Devil's dollars, if they could find out his regions and traffick with them!" The Envoy asked me what was the matter. "Matter," said I, "what is the name of this base villain, with whom you have been dealing at Leeds? I should like to know the name of the scoundrel; for, I'll pledge my life he is to be found amongst the loyal ruffians, who

"have been signing Declarations against the Reformers!"

. Now, my good and sincere friend, Walker, at the head of this card, which you will observe, was made for the purpose of being exhibited in the *Store, or Shop*, in CONNECTICUT (that word being meant by "CON."); at the head of this was an engraving, very finely executed, of which my son took a pencil-sketch, and which was as follows. In the middle was a shield, on the right hand America represented by a fair virgin, surrounded with the emblems of wisdom, science, agriculture, and commerce, on the left an old Lion with a figure seated on him in the shape of a woman with a spear in her hand and some bales of goods behind her. To the American flag the post of honour was given, and, at the top, the British Crown was represented as stricken down by the beak of the American Eagle, which was waving its wings over it in triumph.

Can you, taking the motive into view, imagine any thing more base than this, on the part of the English manufacturer? This is the way, in which these villains show their loyalty and their love of country! And, of such stuff is composed the herds who talk of the "disaffected," and who would gladly see all our throats cut rather than be brought one inch towards doing justice to workmen, whom they regard as their slaves. I dare say, that this Leeds reptile most heartily despised not only BOSTICK, or Bostwick (for that was the Envoy's name), but his constituents into the bargain; and yet he could flatter them, and flatter the prejudices of even the lowest of their customers; he could lick the shoe even of this Bostick, and, I dare say, if necessary, he would have sold him a daughter for the time, for the sake of a bag of dollars.

I could not learn the name of this infamous wretch, or you should have

it. Another ruffian, a Crockery-ware man, had furnished *Mugs* with engravings on them representing *an old crazy Lion, all skin and bone*, with an *American standing with his foot on his neck*. I always regarded it as most unmanly to hang the American flag under ours, in the Serpentine River, during the sham-fight, played off in honour of the visit of the Autocrat and the Despot and their crew. But, this "*great Manufacturer*," as the unnatural scoundrel would call himself, was guilty of baseness greater by ten thousand times.

If it be to be a *blackguard* to utter whole sentences of reproach and execration on such base wretches, I must plead guilty to the charge; and, I must confess, that my anger was not a little heightened by the insensibility of the Manchester Tape-Weavers, who were our companions. But, the reflection that stung me most sharply, was, that these "*indescribable villains*," as Mr. WEATHERELL called CASTLES, pass for loyal men and lovers of their country, while the good honest fellows, who toil for them, are crammed into dungeons as "*disaffected*." Men are punished for *libellous pictures*. Are not *these* libellous? And where are the ferrets of the Attorney General, while these are made by hundreds of thousands and sent all over the world?

You now see the history of this calumny on me. Bostick, undoubtedly, wrote to his Correspondent at Leeds, telling him what passed upon the subject of the Card. The Correspondent, whose low-cunning forsook him in the heat of his base resentment, copied out the paragraph, as far as it suited his purpose, and sent it to the hired press in England, not supposing that it would ever reach my eye. But, here his Devil deceived him. Back it comes to Boston, where a Cossack-Priest paper puts it in, thinking it might annoy me. The New York paper (from what motives I cannot even

guess) gives it a place too. And thus all the dirty parties come and receive the lash at once. One stroke serves them all. The Envoy told us, that he lived in CONNECTICUT, and he used to pester us sometimes about *Humphrey's Ville*. So here he is betrayed into an exposure by his own dear friend at Leeds, in order to do justice to whom he ought now to let us know the base ruffian's name. Is there no good Yorkshireman, who can find us out this name? Bostick was there *last winter*. He wore a snuff-coloured great coat. He is about 5 feet 7 inches high. Rather sandy hair. Grey eyes, with an unmeaning stare. Thin cheeks. A nose like that of Mrs. Towhouse in Joseph Andrews. Owes pretty nearly half his weight to the taylor and shoe-maker. He must have been seen by many persons at Leeds; for he runs about like a dog at a fair. I think he may be traced back to the *cloth-seller*; for that is the base wretch, whose name I wish to get at. Let me have it, and if I do not make him tremble at the name of Bostick as much as a well-whipped sheep-biting cur trembles at the sight of a sheep-skin, I will give up all pretensions as a castigator. I carried my threats farther than to the vermin above mentioned. I said I would examine the shops in New York for proofs of like baseness in the Cotton Trade Gentry of Manchester. I am told, that these proofs are abundant, and, as soon as I get a little leisure, I shall go and collect them. The *Merchants*, as they call themselves, who come here from England, full of *loyalty*, generally begin their career by taking an OATH of *abjuration* of allegiance to any king or prince, and "*particularly to the king of Great Britain*." And, perhaps, at the very same moment, they hold property in England or Scotland or Ireland, which they can hold only in virtue of that very allegiance. While they do this, their talk is



the highest tone of upstart aristocracy; and, they openly express their wishes that the English *People* had but one neck, and that they might be killed by Shepherd and Sidmouth at a single blow. If a man comes here with an intention to *settle* in the country; to transfer really his home for life; to become part of this people: that is a different case; but, then, he must come to be a *republican*, or a *traitor*. What do these men mean, then, by taking this oath, and the very next moment abusing the form of government under which they live? They are doubly traitors; traitors to their own king, and traitors to this Republic. The truth is that their thirst of gain, and oftener their bad character, have induced them to come hither. Here for convenience's sake they gulp down the oath of abjuration, upon the same principle that the Dutch trampled and spit on the Cross at Japan; and, finding here that the mass of the people despise them, and that they are of no more consequence than such creatures ought to be, they begin cursing a state of things, in which their wondrous merits are overlooked. However, they curse in vain. The ox keeps grazing and growing on, while these contemptible vermin are exhausting themselves by impotent attacks on his hide, or are swept away by successive breezes of bankruptcy.

Shall I trouble you with any further account of the occurrences of my voyage? Certain reasons induce me to do it. The subject has been forced upon me; and I will say a little more upon it. The Envoy has said, and it has been published in England, that I "*wanted every one to cringe to me.*" You shall hear the origin of this falsehood. You, who know me well, know that I never insult any body, and that I never will be insulted with impunity. You know also, that where obedience is due to me that I never fail to exact it, if it be not cheerfully rendered. You, and all who have seen my family, know me to be the most kind and in-

dalgent of parents, and, that my children fear neither my blows nor my frowns, but fear only to give me pain. In many families it is a time of mirth when the father is absent. It has always been my return home that has been a subject of joy, from the eldest to the youngest. I do not recollect ever having struck a child in anger; and, if I have, only a very few times in my life, appeared deeply offended with either of them, the pain which that appearance has always given them has made me repent of it. To pronounce their names in a little louder and sharper tone than usual has always been sufficient reproof. The highest delight of the whole brood, little and big, has always been for me to be at leisure to talk to them. In me they have always found the most pleasant of companions; and, hence it is, that they have never sought for strange company. Any propensity to do wrong, if it has ever existed, has been, and I am sure will be, instantly checked by their fear of giving me pain. The word *obedience* has no place in our vocabulary; for, it suffices for my wishes to be known to have them complied with. All this *you* know to be true to the very letter. Do you think, then, that I changed my nature in going on board of CAPTAIN OGDEN'S ship? No, you will not believe this; but, by "*every one,*" the Envoy might not mean to include my *sons*.

Now, then, for the *rest*, I had no *quarrel* with any one but the Captain, and you shall hear the grounds of it. I conceived an early dislike to the Captain. The boatman, whom he had employed at Liverpool, came with his *bill*. The Captain refused to pay part of it; and he cut the matter short by telling the man, that he might take the sum offered, or not; but, that *if he was not out of the ship in five minutes, he should be flung overboard*. The fact of which was right and which wrong I could know nothing of; but, I did not like *this mode* of settling a dispute about money. The next thing

was, that when the *Searcher*, a big fat fellow, came on board, the Captain wanted me to *subscribe towards a sum for him*, to which having received a refusal, he said *then my trunks would all be turned inside out*. To this I replied, that, if so, I should only have to put the things in again, and, thank God, I had *plenty of time*. In short, that, if any body wanted a *bribe* for the fat fellow, they must bribe him themselves, for that I would not. This grew into a very sore place. The provisions on board the ship were such as to make me sorely regret that I had refused all the offers of my friends at Liverpool. One day *all of us*, in the Captain's absence, expressed our wish to have some *bread*, instead of sea-biscuit. I told the *Steward*, as they called the mulatto who waited on us, to make some. None was made. Out of this rose a dispute, and the Captain asking whether any *other* person was discontented besides me and my sons, nobody spoke *but the Envoy*, who answered that he had *nothing to say*, though he had been the *first to complain*, and he had urged me to complain by telling me, that he had had *bread* every day, during his passage to England in the *Galen* from Boston! You know how little I care about eatings and drinkings. I was well and so were my sons. I cared little about the matter. But, having taken the thing in hand, I *tackled* the fellow, as our Hampshire people call it; and he bore it in mind.

With such sober, such *inexorably* sober people to deal with as I and my sons were, it was difficult for an ignorant man to hit upon a mode of obtaining revenge. This was what he fell upon: to call my sons, to whom he was obliged to speak at table, plain *William* and *John*, while he accosted every other person, at the same table, by the usual term of *Mr*. This passed on for some days, at the end of which, one night at supper, and before his whole company, I said, "John, I

"perceive, that the Captain has  
"taken to the addressing of you with  
"the omission of the usual appellation  
"of civility, which he uses towards  
"other passengers. Now, the very first  
"time he does so again, you have my  
"free leave to *resent it upon the spot*." To which John answered, he *certainly would*; and, though he is now but sixteen years of age, Mr. OGDEN, would have found, that perseverance in insolence was not the prudent course. A very warm altercation ensued; great blustering on the part of our Commander; but, he, at last, *begged pardon* for his omission, said it was not intentional, and promised that he would not omit the word in future, which promise he kept. And, this is the ground of the charge of *wanting every one to cringe to me*.

While I am compelled to say what I have said, I will do Mr. OGDEN the justice to say, that he was sober, active, and vigilant; always attentive to his duty, and endued with great presence of mind in very difficult circumstances; and, if he was rude in his general manners, he was careful to dissipate all alarms by his gaiety and levity when he thought his passengers apprehended danger. These are *essentials* in the Master of a ship; and, if he has these, you must put up with disagreeable qualities, and with the effects of his foolish politics or of his stupid economy; but a *studied insult* never ought to be put up with in any man, especially when there are *witnesses* of that insult, and, moreover, when the insult is offered you through your own children. If Mr. OGDEN speaks truth of us, he will say, that he never had passengers to give so little trouble. Every morning of my passage I was up, shaved and dressed, before any other person was stirring. Then I called up my sons. Our place was swept out, or washed out, aired, and beds made by ourselves before breakfast. While others were lolling in their births, we were out on the deck. During the time of sea-sick-



ness, which I had none of, I took care of my sons. Attended them on deck, brought them down, put them to bed, waited on them like a nurse, gave no trouble to any body; and when that was over, our room was, at all times, night as well as day, fair weather or foul weather, as clear from all annoyances as one of our fields at Botley. We were stinted to *one tumbler of fresh water a day to wash in*. We never complained of this, and (see what *can* be done) we kept ourselves perfectly clean. The consequence was, we landed at New York as fresh as we were when we went on board the ship.

Having been brought to speak of this landing at New York, let me here take occasion to notice a falsehood, which I see stated in the London papers with regard to *my reception* in that city. These writers say, that I was received with the *contempt* that I merited. Now, you will observe, that all I send to England is *published* here, word for word and letter for letter (literal errors excepted) in about 12 days after its departure for England. I speak, then, in the hearing of thousands, who, if they can, are able to contradict me, and that, too, upon the spot. With this knowledge, I say, that my being on board the Importer was hardly known when the ship was coming up the harbour. Yet, by the time that she came to the Wharfs, many hundreds of people had assembled and approached as near to her as possible; and, that her deck was *actually crowded*, the moment people could get on board. I could not help thinking how the Envoy, the Captain, and our Manchester Tape-weavers must have been annoyed at being asked by a dozen of people at a time, "*which is Mr. Cobbett*?" "*Where is Mr. Cobbett*?" "*Pray, Sir, tell me which is Mr. Cobbett*?" And to see so many hearty shakes by the hand given me by persons, whom they knew, and whom I did not. In

short, it was my intention at first to remain on board 'till the evening, and then to take a boat and to come over to this Island at once; but, I thought, at last, that it would look *affected*; and so I went on shore about six or seven o'clock, to the great relief of the Captain, whose ship was instantly cleared of all living creatures except himself, his people, and some unfortunate fowls, whose half-starved state had been the protection of their lives.

What reason had I to expect a *more* honourable or kind reception? I had no pretensions to any *reception* at all, and I desired none. I was no emigrant, preferring this country to my own. I had declared before hand, that I still preferred my own country and my own countrymen. Any marks of respect, therefore, which were shown to me, must have arisen from a sense of my own merits of some sort or other; and, it was most manly and honourable in the persons who showed them. The same motives, which had led me to think of coming to this Island, without entering New York at all, induced me to leave that city the next day; namely, that I might have leisure to fulfil my promise to my countrymen, and, that I might avoid all conversation with any one not friendly towards the People of England, being resolved not only to do no act, and utter no word, that should look like turning my back upon my country, but also, not to listen, for one moment, to any conversation, in which my country, as a whole, should be spoken of with contempt, or opprobrium. Being at home, I was free to describe the faults and follies of my country; but distant from her shores, it is for me to forget those faults and follies, and to remember all her virtues, all her sufferings, and all the infamy of her traitorous foes. "*Where liberty is, there is my country*," is a maxim, which, though given to Dr. FRANKLIN, has always appeared to me false and

dangerous. I am not for hunting throughout the world after liberty; but, if I do not find it in my native country, it is my duty to endeavour to cause it to exist there, and to use the means most likely, in my opinion, to effect that purpose. Upon this occasion, too, it was for me, by a striking example, to implant in the breasts of my children an unaltreable attachment to country, and in the breasts also of those hundreds of thousands of young men, of whom SIMMOUTH had the unprincipled audacity to call me the *seducer*. I am sure that this example will be lost upon neither. I would have them remember, that England, though now struggling against despotism, is famed beyond all other nations in the produce of men devoted to the cause of freedom and of justice; and, that, if all traces of the writings and the laws of England were effaced, there would be nothing worthy of the name of freedom left in the world. I would have them remember, that each of them has as full a claim to a share in all the renown of their country as Lord Fitzwilliam, or Lord Lonsdale, has. And, I would have them all entertain the hope, that every man of them will be able to do something, in some way or other, in order to assert and establish this claim, and to convince these Lords and their fellows, that England is not the private property of a band of Boroughmongers. Such are the "*sedition and blasphemy*," which I have taught, and such I still teach. Such are my precepts, and these I endeavour to enforce by my example.

Mr. WOOLER, the eager supplicant for persecution, seems to have chalked out for himself a different line of conduct. It is hardly credible, but it really appears, that, at the very moment when he was assailing me behind my back, and when he had had time to ascertain, that the oldest son I had left behind was but *thirteen*

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"King's Bench, May 23, 1817.

"DEAR SIR.—I am favoured with an opportunity of sending you a few lines through the medium of Mr. —, and you will see by the place from which I date, that the virtuous administration of this blessed country have, in the language of Cobbett, "*laid their paws*" upon me. I would not, however, *change my prison for his safety*. When I threw down the gauntlet to the enemies of freedom, I was determined to stand the contest, let who will take it up; what will be the result, of course, I cannot positively anticipate. There have been instances in which even English juries, as they are now constituted, have refused to follow the partial directions of judges, who are always biassed to the side of the existing ministry—but these instances are so very few, that I must be prepared to expect the contrary, and make up my mind for a couple, perhaps three years imprisonment. *Should this be the case, it will be some time before I see the land of freedom, and enjoy the sweets of liberty in the birth-place of Washington and Franklin, and the adopted country of Paine*. This will reach you, I hope, comfortably situated at New York, enjoying every happiness, in possession and prospect, that can spring from a *favourable climate* and the just administration of equitable laws, while I must patiently submit to the operation of the worst system that ever disgraced the page of legislation. The articles selected for prosecution, are the

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We will not stop to comment on the modesty of this concluding sentence, nor to ask, as ill-natured critics would, what an *expiring remnant* may be pleased to mean; but, we may, surely, be allowed to ask, what species of hitherto unheard of folly it is that can have induced Mr. WOOLER to tell his friend, that he *would not exchange his prison for my safety*, when, in the next moment, he tells him, that, *he only waits to get out of prison in order to come and enjoy that very safety!* If this instance of folly be not absolutely unparalleled, it certainly can find its parallel only in the conduct of his friend in publishing this letter, especially after the publication of my letter to the Venerable Major, where I predicted, that Mr. WOOLER would come to America. If the old practice of burning *Witches* and *Wizards* had been still in vogue, I should have thought that this Mr. CLARK meant to play me a wicked trick, by proving me to be a Con-

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But the wise friend, Mr. CLARK, not content with this typical act of friendship, has, in the warmth of his affection for its absent object, told my Nephew at New York, for my information, that I was wrong in thinking, that Mr. WOOLER would not be a *writer*, if he came to this country; for, that he, Mr. CLARK, *knew* that it was his friend's resolution to go into the *Western Country*, and there to promulgate principles of *universal philanthropy* and *universal citizenship*, a resolution, which, if acted upon, will, in less than a year, leave him as destitute of food and raiment as he already appears to be of modesty and principle. But, let him do what he will; let him write or print; let him bluster or

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fawn; whenever he comes to this country, he comes, stamped by his own hand with the character of "*deserter and coward*," or with that of *malignant and base and impotent calumniator*.

That you, my dear Walker, and all the sincere friends of our beloved country, may be upon your guard against men of this description, and that this may find your family in good health, is the anxious wish of

Your faithful friend,

WM. COBBETT.

P. S. You know, that the brother of STEWART, the vile proprietor of the COURIER, who was so instrumental in the endeavours to prepare the way for destroying Mr HUNT, and from whose office the Placard Libels against me were sent forth to be stuck up *by night*; you know, that this fellow's brother is BRITISH CONSUL at Havre de Grace. You have lately seen the exposure of one REYNOLDS, who is a British Consul, and who occupied with dreadful success in Ireland an office similar to the late office of the Honourable Mr. CASTLES. Whether this honourable gentleman will become a *British Consul* is more than I can say; yet, *abroad* somewhere he must, one would think, go. There is,

I see, a "GEORGE MANNERS, Esq." appointed British Consul for Massachusetts. This, *to be sure*, cannot be that very same *George Manners*, who was the Editor of an infamous publication called the *Satirist*, set up by the Boroughmonger crew, some years ago, in order to write me down, and the infamy of which was so flagrant, that it was a question, debated publicly at the *British Forum*, and advertised in the news-papers, "whether BILL SOAMES, the notorious Pick-pocket, or George Manners of the *Satirist*, was the greatest pest of society." This never can be that same Manners, who was so long in the King's Bench prison, and who was convicted of a foul libel on Mr. HALLETT? Yet the names are the same. Pray inquire into this matter. *That Manners used to boast*, that he was *related* to the Duke of Rutland's family, though his mother was *never married* to any of them. This man can never have been made a Consul, to be sure! However, inquire. Ask Mr. FINNERTY; and remember me very kindly to him at the same time. *He* will tell you at once; and the thing is worthy of *particular attention*, especially as this Manners pretended to be, and, perhaps, was, a by-blow offspring of some of the most famous Boroughmongers in the kingdom.

Entered at Stationers' Hall.

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